

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY MANILA
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 198307

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEAN, EGEN, RP

SUBJECT: ASEAN/US MINISTERIAL DIALOGUE: PHILIPPINE
ATMOSPHERICS

1. PHILIPPINE DELEGATION APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN HIGHLY
SATISFIED WITH ASEAN MEETING AND WITH LEVEL OF COURTESIES
EXTENDED DURING THEIR WASHINGTON STAY. GENERAL ROMULO AND
OTHERS IN DELEGATION HAVE EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION
PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY. MRS. MANALO REMARKED THAT THE
VISITING MINISTERS -- AND PARTICULARLY ROMULO -- HAD BEEN
VERY PLEASED. HER HUSBAND ADDED THAT SUBSTANTIVELY IT
WAS "MUCH MUCH BETTER THAN LAST YEAR'S MEETING IN MANILA."

2. IMELDA MARCOS ANNOUNCED EARLY IN THE WEEK HER INTENTION
TO PARTICIPATE AS A MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION,
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GIVING THE PHILIPPINES A TOTAL OF FIVE FULL MINISTERS
WHEREAS NO OTHER COUNTRY HAD MORE THAN TWO. SHE SWOOPED
DOWN ON WASHINGTON AUGUST 2 FOR MEETING WITH SENATE FOREIGN
RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERS -- WHERE SHE REMAINED RELATIVE-
LY SILENT -- BUT RETURNED TO NEW YORK SAME EVENING,
OSTENSIBLY TO MEETING ARRIVING SON BONG-BONG. WE SPECULATE,
HOWEVER, THAT INTRA-DELEGATION POLITICS AND PROTOCOL

MAY ALSO HAVE BEEN A FACTOR SINCE SHE WAS NOT HEAD OF THE DELEGATION.

3. GENERAL ROMULO MADE SEVERAL VERY HELPFUL INTERVENTIONS, SHARED THE SPOTLIGHT WELL WITH OTHER ASEAN DELS AND WITHIN HIS OWN DELEGATION, AND WAS VERY UPBEAT IN HIS TOASTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS. HE APPEARED VERY PLEASED WITH EVERYTHING, EXCEPT FOR MISSING THE AFTERNOON SESSION ON AUGUST 3 WHEN REFUGEES WERE DISCUSSED. HIS ABSENCE AT THAT SESSION WAS VERY DISCREET, WITH THE REST OF THE DELEGATION PRESENT. THEY EXPLAINED HIS ABSENCE AS A NEED FOR REST.

4. MRS. MARCOS REMAINED IN NEW YORK AUGUST 3 MISSING THE SECRETARY'S DINNER, AND RETURNED TO WASHINGTON AUGUST 4 JUST IN TIME FOR CALL BY ASEAN MINISTERS AND AMBASSADORS ON THE PRESIDENT, AND FOR SECRETARY BLUMENTHAL'S LUNCHEON. SHE DID NOT ATTEND THE CLOSING OR ANY OTHER SESSION OF THE DIALOGUE. PHILIPPINE EMBASSY ASKED WHETHER HER PERSONAL ADVISORS, GOV. BENJAMIN ROMUALDEZ AND AMBASSADOR RODOLFO SEVERINO, COULD BE INCLUDED IN MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT. WE EXPLAINED THAT LIST OF THOSE ATTENDING MEETING WITH PRESIDENT HAD ALREADY BEEN FIXED ON BASIS OF INFORMATION FROM ASEAN SECRETARIAT AND THAT LAST-MINUTE ADDITIONS WERE IN EFFECT IMPOSSIBLE. IT WAS POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN WHITE HOUSE ACCREDITATION FOR CONFIDENTIAL

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HER PHOTOGRAPHERS. ARRIVING LAST AT WHITE HOUSE MEETING MRS. MARCOS WAS MOST PROMINENTLY PHOTOGRAPHED WHEN GREETED BY PRESIDENT, EFFECTIVELY UPSTAGING THE REMAINDER OF DELEGATION. SHE ALSO HAD A GOOD SERIES OF PHOTOS TAKEN WITH THE PRESIDENT'S MOTHER. CHRISTOPHER

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